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COLLECTION

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

TO THE

Third Legislative Assembly,

SOUTH DAKOTA.

Delivered January 3. 1893.

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PIERRE:  
CARTER PUBLISHING CO.  
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# INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

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*Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:*

I congratulate you that we meet under such favorable auspices. The condition of our affairs throughout the State is not only highly gratifying, but we feel justified in the hope that we have measurably passed that period of adversity which has been so generally the experience of the people of newly settled states.

## SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.

Our settlement has not only been phenomenal, but we have come, almost in a day, to take our place as one of the great grain producers in the sisterhood of states. Our stock and mining interests are rapidly assuming vast proportions, and we gladly believe that the time is not far distant when South Dakota will occupy an enviable position for its productions, the virtue of its laws, and the character of its people.

Much of prosperity is often accredited, and of adversity charged to the party having control of the State. The eyes of the people are turned toward you in a very positive manner and they are anxiously hopeful that the trust and confidence they have reposed in you may be realized. They understand full well that it is not in the multitude of laws that their interests are best subserved, but they are expecting that your enactments shall be such as tend to their prosperity and that these laws when made, shall be faithfully administered. It is our duty to see that so far as lies in our power to prevent, they are not disappointed.

## THE WORLD'S FAIR.

Among the subjects to which your attention is respectfully invited, is the making of what in your wisdom you may deem a suitable appropriation for an exhibit of the resources of the State at the Columbian exposition at Chicago, during the present year, and to provide by law for its expenditure.

A number of our patriotic citizens, organizing themselves into a commission, have raised from among our people a considerable sum of money and have expended the same in erecting at Chicago what they have deemed a suitable building for the use of the State, and in gathering material for the exhibit. Neither the building nor the material for the exhibit is complete. You will be asked to reimburse these citizens for moneys already expended, and assume State control of this enterprise, making provision for the appointment of such number of our people for its management as in your judgment you may deem necessary.

## OUR PUBLIC LANDS.

A large amount of land granted us by the government, for State and educational purposes, still remains unselected for want of means to defray the expense of its selection and certification. Wisdom would seem to indicate that these lands should be secured as speedily as possible before all our

most valuable land is taken by settlers under our homestead law. An appropriation for this purpose will be asked by the State, and it is believed a reasonable amount should be granted.

In this connection, I desire to call your attention to an act of congress, giving to this state one section of land in the Sisseton military reservation with the Fort buildings to be used by us for militia purposes. The act mentioned declares that whenever it shall be used otherwise than as provided, or shall cease to be so used, it shall revert to the government. The wisdom of accepting it under these conditions is questionable. The expense which the state must incur in providing for a conservator for the property and the keeping of the buildings in repair, will greatly increase the cost of the maintenance of our militia, while at the same time we would be compelled to hold our annual musters at a point remote from railroads demanding expensive transport to and from the ground.

I would respectfully suggest that the attention of our senators and representatives in congress be called to this matter and that they be asked to secure, if in their power, such change in the act as shall make it possible for us to take the property not as a donation for specific purposes, but as indemnity land.

#### REGARDING OIL INSPECTION.

The revision of our oil inspection law is thought to be worthy of your careful consideration. The safety of our people and the preservation of their property, would seem to demand that careful inspection shall be had, not only of illuminating oils but also of gasoline used within the state. It is believed that this may be accomplished by amendment of our present law, increasing both the duties and the compensation of the inspector, giving greater satisfaction and security to our people without any increase of their burden.

#### STEAM BOILER EXPLOSION.

The frequency of explosions of steam boilers used in threshing, causing great loss of life, is an urgent appeal that something be done to insure greater safety in their use, and I earnestly urge upon you, if it shall be in your power, the enactment of a law to provide for the inspection of steam boilers, and the careful examination as to their competency of persons who may be employed as engineers.

#### DISCRIMINATING FREIGHT RATES.

There is much complaint among our people of discriminating freight rates as charged by some of the railroads doing business in this State. I am not one of those who believe in indiscriminate war upon railroads. I have tried to fully recognize the fact, that without them the greater part of our State would be uninhabitable, except as a grazing country; that in many instances they have been the pioneers, and have been operated at a loss; that we are yet very anxious that more roads should be built, especially those which shall connect the eastern portion of the State with our rich mining region in the Black Hills; yet we know that without the people the roads would be valueless and they should not be permitted to become our masters.

#### RAILROAD COMMISSIONERS.

The Republican state convention held at Madison passed unanimously a resolution asking that the board of railroad commissioners be hereafter made elective, with such increased powers, as shall make abuse of its privilege by any railroad in this state longer impossible. There are many of our citizens who honestly question the expediency of making these commissioners elective, on the ground that its effect may be to bring the railroads into our politics, and that a board appointed by the Governor is quite as likely to be efficient, as if selected by a convention. It was however in response to a popular demand that the resolution referred to was passed, and it is my duty to

present this matter to you for your consideration. Meantime it is hoped that our present railroad board may be vested with such increased power as was contemplated by the resolution.

#### OUR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The prosperity of our public institutions is something which our people very much desire. Although so young as a state, we point with pride to the provision which has been made for the education of our children, and the care of our unfortunates. These institutions cannot be maintained without money, and the people pay it willingly for such a purpose. Appropriations amounting in the aggregate to a considerable sum, will perhaps be asked for their support by those having them in immediate charge. While we ought to remember that their proper maintenance is imperative, yet I conjure you that you carefully examine all claims impartially, and never forget that a reckless use of the people's money is criminal.

#### THE SOLDIERS' HOME.

An estimate of appropriations required for the maintenance of the soldiers' home, and for such repairs and improvements as seem necessary, is prepared by the board having this institution in charge, and will be presented to you for your consideration. It gives our people pleasure to know that its conduct has thus far been a marked success. The big-hearted man who has been the commandant since the establishment of the home, has made it in the highest sense what was contemplated in the law creating it. To him and to his noble wife the thanks of the people are freely given. It is hoped their successor will be equally worthy.

The provision of homes for old soldiers is in no sense regarded as a charity, but has been adopted by the government and several of the states as the most proper means to be employed for the discharge of some part of the obligation which the people feel to the men who have not only performed the highest duty known to an American citizen, but helped to save the government in doing it. It is believed you will make all necessary appropriation for the maintenance of this institution.

#### IMPROVE THE BALLOT.

It is believed that our present ballot system is susceptible of improvement. Our experience has taught us that whatever may be done to simplify the ballot, and make it plain to those least able to understand it, ought to be. The free, untrammelled expression of the will of the voter, is the object sought to be obtained, and it is thought that this may better be accomplished, by so arranging the ballot that the names of the candidates for office of each party represented, should appear in separate columns, with such other changes from our present method, as your experience and wisdom may suggest.

#### ELECTION OF SUPREME AND CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES.

Our constitution provides that "the judges of the supreme court, circuit courts, and county courts shall be chosen at the first election held under the provisions of this constitution, and thereafter as provided by law, and the legislature may provide for the election of such officers on a different day from that on which an election is held for any other purpose, and may for the purpose of making such provision, extend or abridge the term of office for any such judges then holding, but not in any case more than six months. The term of all judges of circuit courts, elected in the several judicial circuits, throughout the State, shall expire on the same day." There has as yet been no provision made by the legislature for the election of any of these officers other than the judges of county courts, and your attention is respectfully called to this subject. The terms of the supreme and circuit court judges now holding, will expire on the first day of January 1894, and it is important that you make provision for the election of their successors.

## THE REVENUE LAW.

Section 98 of our present revenue law provides that "it shall be the duty of the treasurer, on and after the first day of July in each year, to immediately proceed to collect all delinquent personal taxes, and if such taxes are not paid on demand, he shall distrain sufficient goods and chattels belonging to the persons charged with such taxes, if found within the county, to pay the same with accrued penalty and interest, and all accruing costs." It will at once present itself to your minds, that this demand is to be made at a time of the year when very many of our people, whose taxes may be delinquent, are perhaps the least able to pay them. Our farming people, many of whom must depend upon the year's production for the discharge of all their obligations, have at this time in the year nothing to sell from which to obtain money, and they can ill afford the expense of distraint and sale. The absolute necessity that taxes must be paid with the greatest possible promptitude cannot be given too much emphasis. But it is suggested to you for your careful consideration, as to whether some change in time for their enforced collection may not properly be made.

## IN CONCLUSION.

If it shall be possible for you to perform the important duties demanding your attention and bring your session to a close before the expiration of the constitutional limit, it is respectfully suggested that such action would give great satisfaction throughout the State.

I have great confidence in your wisdom and in your desire to faithfully discharge the duties for which you have been chosen. Faithfulness and honesty are equally valuable in public as in private life and the man who thoroughly believes this and keeps it most clearly in view, is quite sure to receive the approval of his people.

It will be my duty to communicate to you from time to time such matters as shall seem to demand your attention, and I take great pleasure in hoping and believing that the people have entrusted the making of their laws to men who will prove themselves in every way worthy of the confidence of their constituents.

C. H. SHELDON.